THE LAST ACT.

Final Liberation of French Soil by the German Army of Occupation.

VERDUN, ETAIN AND METZ

Graphic Letters from a Herald Correspondent Detailing the Closing Scenes.

MANTEUFFEL ON STILTS.

The Last German Soldier to Leave the

THRILLING INCIDENT AT THE CLOSE.

mst., after an unnecessarily tedious journey from Metz; for, although the distance is, or is said to be, take nearly four hours in doing it. A slow people, these Germans, in civil business, and very method-scal in their manner of treating it.

Immediately after I reached Verdun 1 went to e M. de St. Vailler, French Chargé d'Affaires at

I passed through the quiet streets, the indwellers which seemed to be greatly subdued in mind, they evidently had learned the imprudence of evincing any demonstrative or unwelcome currently with respect to strangers, or giving vent to the wonder which is wont to seize upon a country town at the aspect of a new face. They let me go to scan a stranger too narrowly, lest he should take offence and turn out to be one of their conauthority. Possibly some of them may have had to do with the chief of the staff, who hinted, in no mysterious manner, what a conqueror's wrath can o, but an hour or two ago, on the Franco-German

frontier at Batilly.

In my wanderings I met a gentleman with the red rosette of an officer of

THE LEGION OF HONOR in one of his button holes. He had some papers in his hand, and he bowed to me politely, while he re-

ested to know my business. "I want," said I, "to see M. de St. Vallier. I am nainted with him and I trust that my visit will t be unwelcome."

tary and can answer any question you may wish to put about our present doings here." He was a very gentiemanly man, that officer of the Legion of Honor, and as I handed him my card he was so good as to remember my name, and, dropping the al style, he spoke to me with that easy familfarity which belongs to the freemasonry of office in dealings between those who are or have been

are expecting their decision with some nxiety." He would have said more, but a door Legion of Honor—a tall, slim, aristocratic shed with a faded sort of splendor, but look ing bare and comfortless.

The tall gentleman, who had dark hair, dark

res, and that mild, sober, polished aspect which

ce in these difficult times.

s, and a minute afterwards we were seated side w side upon a large sofa of the last century, talkdiplomacy, and which sounds so unintelligible to unpractised ears, but is nevertheless plain and se who are accu

This is what I gathered from the French diplomatist, who met my interrogatories most loyally

"France," said he, "has no interest in concealing anything. She upon her side has honorably fulfilled the conditions of the treaty of peace with Germany, and Germany has done the same.

"I cannot express too highly the esteem and even

the affection with which General Manteuffel has

"Our intercourse has been and is in every respect most satisfactory. I have no complaint whatever make against any one of the German authorities who have one and all behaved to me with uniform candor, justice and respect towards the Prench nation, whose representative I have been during my official negotiations with them. I am glad to have the opportunity of saying this distinctly and unequivocally. I am, if possible, more glad to know that my sentiments upon this subject will be placed by you before the great AMERICAN PROPLE,

"The good feeling at present existing here between the French and the German is not confined to General Manteufiel and myself, and to the gento be much more general than to a cursory observer It may seem to be. The French gendarmes, who the Prussian soldiers; and our troops, who are beginning to arrive, receive the usual military ors, which are paid to them with a scrupulous

and chivalrous courtesy.
"The last instalment of the indemnity was paid at Berlin yesterday. It was paid in specie, according to the conditions of the treaty of peace; and to count it is rather a tedious business, which will ake about four days, if I may judge by precedents.

"As soon as news can be received that the last franc has been told into the German treasury the German troops still occupying Verdun will depart. "All rumors of delay, or misunderstanding, or the part of the French or the Germans, are and have been unfounded. There has been no shut-

any kind, I pledge you my word of honor. "No, there is absolutely nothing which the French government, under existing circumstances, might

think it inexpedient to publish in a French jour-mal; or I might ask your aid, through the important ournal you represent, to make it known. "La France n'a eu qu'à se touer des allemands

you most positively that the last German army of occupation which remains is France will leave as with good and friendly feetings, and there is not, to the best of my knowledge and belief, anything whatsoever of recent occurrence which is likely to When I contrasted M. de St. Vallier and M. de

Benedetti with certain other French diplematists, whose intimacy and confidence I have enjoyed, I could hardly believe my ears or my eyes. There was nothing intractable or self-asserting about M. de St. Vallier as there used to be about most of the high noblemen who formerly represented France in ner diplomatic relations with Germany. They were delightful hosts and companions, and I remember that I was seldom out of the French Embassy of an evening when I was in Hanover and Vienna. But when I saw either of the French

by Vanhan and by ten detacted redoubts. It is not a strong place, however, and is only reckoned as a fortress of the fourth class. Its history is

who was compelled to retire; but in 1792 it was taken by the Prussians, after a bombardment of afteen hours, and subsequently evacuated by them. From 1803 to 1814 Verdun was used as a place of detention for Englishmen imprisoned by Napoleon, after which its records contained nothing of importance for more than half a century, and at the beginning of the late war it was a quiet, sleepy. old-lashioned place, which could number a popula-tion of about 14,000. Its garrison at the time of the siege consisted of 7,000 men of all arms.

Verdun was regularly invested on the 13th of September, 1870, and on the evening of the 11th of October all obstacles were cleared away from the ground lying between the besiegers and the fortress, where the French had collected

STORES OF POTATORS.

and whence they had been accustomed to reconnoitre the position of the German batteries.

Verdun capitulated on the 5th November, when the Germans captured two generals, eleven superior officers and 150 stabiterns, and about 4,000 men, together with 136 guns, 23,000 infantry rifles, and a large quantity of military stores.

It has been said of Verdun that, as a fortress, it is simply an anachronism, since it lies, like Sedan, in a hole, and can be commanded from the neighboring heights by modern siege artiflery. The siege works of the town occupied in 1870 exactly the same positions as in 1792, when the King of Prussia surveyed the place after its capture and remarked that it was too straggling for any permanent resistance. The defence, nevertheless, must have been respectable, for the besieged had shelled and reduced to ashes the dwellings in the environs, occupied by the enemy.

The Captain of the French gendarmes, who re-

shelled and reduced to ashes the dwellings in the environs, occupied by the enemy.

The Captain of the French gendarmes, who recently arrived at Verdun, dined with me yesterday. I asked him whether anything had come within the sphere of his observations likely to disturb the present friendly state of the relations existing between the French and Germans, and he said that there had recently occurred a very serious.

RIOT AT LUNWVILLE.

A mob of about 3,000 excitable people had collected in the street there with the view of taxing summary revenge upon the Germans by putting to death two mercantile men who had arrived at Luneville for commercial purposes, and who were suspected of having served in the German army. It appeared, as the Captain of gendarmes was at present advised, that these mercantile men had been nearly torn to pieces by a reckiess and exasperated crowd of loolish persons who had, said the Captain, very grossly misconducted themselves, because it was indecent for 3,000 people to Iail upon two harmless travellers and attempt to murder them. The affair, he told me, might have ended badly, and one of the mercantile men had been already roughly handled, when the French troops were called out and ultimately succeeded in rescuing them. The mercantile men were then smuggied through a back door to a place of safety, and finally escorted to the railway station by a strong detachment of soldiers, who protected them from further insult till they took their departure.

Generally speaking, no hitch had occurred save hitches of a pleasant character. As I walked down the

I saw some German non-commissioned officers and French nolice iraternizing, and I observed a pretty French tobacconist, whose conversation was by no means of that rabidly patriotic sort which would conduce to the belief that she would be likely to offer any Irantic opposition to modest advances from her hereditary enemies, several of whom appeared to take extreme pleasure in her gay discourse.

rom ner nereditary chemies, severai of whom appeared to take extreme pleasure in her gay discourse.

The drum major of a German battalion at Etain has married a French girl; and German officers, now here in garrison, have brought French wives from Nanoy. I observed also that the trading portion of the community at Verdun were extremely ready to turn an honest penny in commercial dealings with their country's loes; and they appeared to have so many opportunities of doing so that the rumor of their gains had attracted a large concourse of French pediers, who hovered about the cafes frequented by the German cadets and volunteers, who had more money than experience. I saw one of them, after having sold some trumpery far beyond its value to a blue-eved lad fresh from a province on the Russian frontier, pack up his wares rather quickly, as though in haste to be off. He seemed rather ashamed of himself, for even a French pedier is seldom a rogue by nature; and he looked nervously toward the window to see it one of those grim, gray-bearded majors might not be passing before he got clear away with his pinnager. Perhaps that pedier had been trounced for such doings in his day.

a very worthy gentleman, has kindly permitted me to take a copy of an address which he is about to publish to his fellow citizens, declaring the view which he takes of the present state of affairs in his worshipful or official capacity. Here is the address of this civic dignitary, and it announces a great fact:—

But we must not forget that there are in our immediate neighborhood certain populations who have remained French at heart, and who suffer because they are separated from their mother country. This grievous remembrance tells us that we have neither to celebrate

are separated from their mother country. This grievous remembrance tells us that we have neither to celebrate a triumph nor a victory.

After the departure of the Germans the German the Country of the East-Ry will ring a loyous peal and the tricolored flag will be hoisted on one of the towers of the cathedral. At this signal the fown Hall will be adorned with flags, and in the evening our public buildings will be illuminated. To invite you to follow this example—that is, to hang out flags from your windows by day and light them up after dark—would be to insult you. Your particism has no need of encouragement. An extraordinary distribution of food will be made to the poor.

The Mayor,

Which, being interpreted, signifies Benedict—by no means a bad name for a civic functionary.

I learn, toc, from a personal friend of Mr. Mayor that the Municipal Council of Verdun has passed the following resolutions to celebrate the day of deliverance:

A large distribution of provisions and a small distribution of money will be made, with other comforting success to the indigent, by the Bureas de Beneductores (Benevolence Office), out of the town funds.

As soon as the German troops have left Verdun the tricolored flag will be huisted over the city gates and elsewhere, and the city will be lighted up at the public expense.

elsewhere, and the city will be lighted up at the public expense.

A banquet will be offered by the town to the officers and soldiers of the first column of French troops which enters the citadel.

"Moreover, behold!" (et puis tenez!) says the friend of Mr. Mayor. "Here is the telegram which the Mayor has received from

THE FIGENCH OF NEW YORK,"
and he handed me a neat manuscript copy of the

Telegram to the Mayor of the town of Verdun from the French of New York:—
To VERDUN FROM NEW YORK.

Received the 10th September, at twenty-five minutes past seven, post meridian:—
Mossizeu iz Mainz ps Verdun, Meuse:—
Received iz Mainz ps Verdun, Meuse:—
Received to the 10th September, at twenty-five minutes past seven, post meridian:—
LES FRANCAIS DE NEW YORK.

Now these words, being rendered into English, signify:

Signify:—
To the Mayor of Verdue, upon the Mause:—
Gratitude for devotion; congratulation on liberation.
THE FRENCH OF NEW YORK.

Gratitude for devotion, congratulation on liberation. THE FRENCH OF NEW YORK.

And I thought as I read them, with something like a tightening of the throat, which has, perhaps, been onten felt by the friends of France in her trouble, that the telegram of the French of New York was a true heart cry, expressed in that language which, far above all other modern languages, most tersely and memorably tells a great and generous thought. It was fine, vigorous and French. The French of New York have a right to know that it brightened the eyes and quickened the pulses of many gallant gentlemen; and that, although they are far away from the nomeland, and many of their hearts must be sorrowing over unmerited exile and mislortune, they will never more be forgotten by the brave citizens of Verdun. Maybe, if a sient prayer can help them, it has been aireacy uttered by thousands, and verily it shall not tail to the ground.

General the Baron Manteuffel is really a FINE OLD WARRIOR.

General the Baron Mantenfiel is really a

FINS OLD WARRIOR.

He has been man of all work in France since the
peace, and has often had a hard and thankless
task, out of which little glory was to be got at best,
and which might very probably have put a bad
end to a long and honorable military career. He
has performed that task excellently well, and as
the count de St. Vallier, the French commissioner
at his headquarters, assured me he has not only
dealt fairly and justly with a conquered nation
which he might have sorely vexed, but he has
been gentle and courteous, even kind, to such a
degree as to win the "affection" (and that was
the word used by M. de St. Vallier) even of his
country's foes.

But this man is not exempt from human weakness, and, like most of the German generals, is a
queer compound of simplicity, shrewdness and a
restless sort of vanity which betrays him, and
then very often into milculous positions. So now,
having indiscreetly refused to receive newspaper
correspondents, and yet desirous of being advertised at least once more, he quite as indiscreetly
sent a secret emissary to sing his praise and get it
printed.

Said the fat man, who came to me on his behalf,

remember that I was seldom out of the French Embassy of an evening when I was in Hanover and Vienna. But when I saw either of the French Ministers at those courts, during the official intercourse with the German authorities, they certainly seemed to bristle all over with thorns.

THE TOWN OF VERBUN

145 miles to the cast of Paris 120 miles west of

by vigorous atterning to stem the revolutionary tide in General. What would you have, sit? His Excellency is an aristocrat."

"Well," said I, not unamused by this prologue, "what then? His Excellency saw a correspondent at Nancy, and was so exuberantly polite that he rode up and addressed Mr. Crawford while at the head of his troops and surrounded by his staff."

"Ah!" said the fat man. "The 'Excellency saw that correspondent by accident. He could not repeat the experiment, though I put it to him, as strongly as I dared, that he had better do so."

"So, then," said, the tas much gravity as I could muster, "His Excellency wisely considers it beneath his dignity to hold any intercourse with newspaper correspondents?"

The fat man sighed in a deprecatory manner, and said, "Pal. aber nein, wissen Sie," after the manner of his countrymen when they are being demurely smoked, and have an laward consciousness that they are slipping, through mist and darkness, into a scrape.

"Is the 'Excellenz' aware," I pursued in sober tones of mild reproof, "that his Emperor is a newspaper correspondent and was formerly a very active member of the press? Does not the Excellenz know that Prince Bismarck is a newspaper writer of considerable diligence, and that even i, an humble member of the most honorable profession now existing upon earth, masmuch as it is purely intellectual, hold the rank of Brigadier General in Her Britannic Majesty's service, and have conversed personally with nearly all the crowned heads of Europe and Asia, also with some of the African monarchs! while my friend here, a distinguished war correspondent whom the Excellenz has also rejused to receive, is a far more illustrious person than I am, for he has actually received from the Emperor of Germany himself the same rank in the order of nobility as the Excellenz himself, and is a German baron. I, indeed, possess some titles, and am a count of the Hely Roman Empire and a grandee of the first class in Spain. I have two dukedoms in Italy and one elsewhere, with oth

icled them with rare ability and military experience?"

The fat man fidgeted with the roll of fine paper which he carried under his arm, and then observed.

"Schen sie," here is a biography of the General.

"What more could you want of him? I will tell you everything you can wish to know."

This terminated the interview, and the military messenger took his departure.

THE CONDUCT OF THE GERMANS CRITICISED BY A FRENCH WOMAN.

"You think that Verdun has always been as quiet during the German occupation as you see it

quiet during the German occupation as you see it now," said the youngest of three French women who keep the Café Comény, opposite my hotel. "Do not deceive yourself. We owe our present tranquility and freedom from insult to the repre-sentatives of the newspaper press who are now among as?"

war, and had brought nothing out linear some of them.

As I sat in the Café Labordere a fearful storm which had been gathering for days burst over the city of Verdun. The thunder roared in protracted peals, and the lightning flashed in terrors as the drop scene fell on the death of French renown to the crash of that Olympian music. It had been a strife of Titans, and it ended fittingly—so far.

French renown to the crash of that Olympian music. It had been a strile of Titans, and it ended fittingly—so far.

I never saw such vivid flashes of lightning. They dominated and overpowered the gaslight, putting it scornfully in the shade, and the rain lasted THE CAPTIVE LAND

With distinct strokes, seeming to shout a warning, or, perhaps, a propaccy, through the wind as it bellowed in the pauses of that fiery deluge. Yet amid the thunder claps billiard balls knocked to gether with a click like a scoffer's laugh, and drinking glasses clashed together as Teuton topers and a guttural "Lebe hoch?" So rarely do human creatures hear the voice of Heaven while strength and health and youth remain to them!

Packing up, packing up, packing up—that was what I saw next; packing up, packing up—that was what I saw next; packing up fragile trumperies which will become helricoms and deathly reminiscences of the late war—and I thought that if I could give some faithful and exact account of this thing kind and true eyes might read it some day, if not now, and moisten as they gased upon a sistaful picture of some warrior sire about to ride away irom a conquered land.

EARLY IN THE MORNING.

Five A. M., Saturday, September 13, 1873, is the beginning of the end of the liberation of France from her latest invaders. The Prussian bugles sounded the reveille just before dawn, and at 5:10 A. M. the whole city was pastir. The baggage waggons of the departing army began to roli of shortly

afterwards, and at 5:30, when the day broke, all the streets were tred by hurrying footsteps.

I was at the telegraph office before six, and knocked up the good natured man and his wife who managed international communications there, though I knew they had been worried almost into brain fever the day before by the anxious correspondents of the London papers. But they got out of their beds cheerfully enough, and the first words which were dashed from Verdun by wire this morning made up the telegram to the New Youx Errato.

A. M.—The last field post of the Germans galloped away with letters and despatches for the frontier, big with news of the advancing army. The statue of Chevert, which stands in the market place, is provided with a fing and a string to pull it, that no time may be lost when the signal for rejoic ngs is rung out from the cathedral belify. Meantline a company of Germany infantry is forming in the neighborhood.

At a house overlooking the bridge of St. Grotx and a sluggish branch of the Meuse is a little boy of six years old, up be times and standing at a window, dressed like a tricolored fang. He is quite framed in with flowers, and looks like a picture. Beneath him is an angler fishing for perch, and unmoved by the exestement of his fellow citizens. Everybody else is in leverish haste to see the last of the invading bosts. The very handbills on the walls are grinted in the mational colors of red, white and bine.

At 6:10 A. M. the German officers begin to cluster round the Caie Labordère in full uniform, ready for coffee—perhaps for a little brandy, too. They are a little too boisterous and jocular. The beautiful old town is coming out into the usylight gorgeous as a nosegay, though the sky is overcast and lowering. I see many priests with contented faces, well shaven, and one or two dozen tructilent fellows who appear to need a strong police; but there are no gendarmes about. The calm before the storm, or rather that chill quiet wine come guite for deawn, is the only thing which can be compared

among which the grand old air of "Hell dem deutschen Vateriand!" so Lamiliar during the war, is predominant.

7:38 A. M.—There is a deep pause and hush in the Frussian ranks for some minutes after the music ceases, and perhaps some brave hearts are siently offering up thanks to Heaven for the issue of that momentous struggle which is now over. Presently the silence is stirred rather than broken by the murmur of the crowd now gathering, and fifty street boys make their presence felt, being unwillingly escorted by French police. Meantime captain Mettral, of the French gendarmes, attended by a Prussian orderly, canters across the open space and through the open gates of the citated, disappearing beyond as though swallowed up by that open-mouthed mass of masonry, and again the silence of expectation reigns over all.

7:40 A. M.—Prussian officers move about on horseback, saluting each other first with military precision, then shaking hands, and the crowd of sightseers grows larger; but it is not dense, and there are no well-dressed French people in it. The Prussian troops show a marveilous line as the word of command is ever and anon given out to them in guttural tones, not unlike the grinding of a coffee mill working rapidly, for every officer and noncommissioned officer repeats it. A photographer appears on the ground, under permission from superior authority, also under authority in more ways than one. He fixes his apparatus at a first floor window in a small honse which commands a good view of the proceedings, and he sends a message to me requesting that I will ask the gentiemen of the press not to move at the critical moment when the troops begin to cheer before they march past.

7:40 A. M.—The Twenty-fourth forms into line, and there is a sound of drums thundering in all directions as the latest companies arrive on the parade ground from their distant quarters. The black eagle, surmounting the golden star, the droopping horse tails and the cymbals, which for the businees of the day has begun, and Colonel Berna

nade before the fortress is truly magnificent. There was a living sea of molten gold, with dark blue depths, and the woods and valleys of the Meuse for a background.

"DER HERR EXCELLENZ

Manieuffl virid gleich kommen," says an aidede-camp galloping by to Linsingen, and bringing his horse upon his haunches as he salutes the General commanding the brigade. The Prussians are rough riders, but the ground is soft and rotten on the esplanade, so that there will be fewer curbs and spavins made than are usual on a field day. The last men who come on parade before the Commander-in-Chief are the Prussian field police, who are to form the rear guard. They are handsome, active young fellows, smartly dressed and admirably mounted.

We are tormented by the assaults of guerilla companies of wasps, who fly in circles round us, and apparently angry at having their customary exercise ground on the esplanade disturbed this sultry morning.

8 A. M.—A company of French gendarmes march out of the citadel to take possession of the barracks just vacated by the German troops.

8 A. M.—Company of French gendarmes march out of the citadel to take possession of the barracks just vacated by the German troops their musical instruments and the field officers begin to lounge in their saddles, gathering into groups, expectant.

8:15 A. M.—General Linsingen orders the troops to present arms, and there is a sudden flush of sunshine as Excellenz Manteuffel, in spectacles, rides slowly on to the esplanade. He is mounted on a peaceiul chestnut, with all the steel taken out of him, and the renowned Excellenz looks a very feelle broken old man. I think I never saw a face so ghastiy and corpselike. His complexion is of a pale blue, and his mouth almost fearful in its expression of latigue and sickness. He is dressed in a light blue dragoon uniform, a frockcoat and high riding boots, but seems too weak to bear his helmet, and performs his part in this grand military pageant in a forage cap. Beside him on his right rides Colone! Von der Burg, the caust

The state of the s the delightuil people with whom they have been living so long, and are, perhaps, not glad to go away "from this gay land of lyre and lance."

Scheiden und meiden thut gar web.

And there are moist eyes as all the regimental bands together begin to play slowly the grandest of all anthems, "Het! Dir im Siegrekranz," which is set to the fine old English (if the, indeed, English) air of "God Save the King." But its origin, like that of most other things in this world, is doubtful. Regiment after regiment now marches past that ghostly old soldier on the tranquil horse. They salute him and he returns their salute, sitting on his meek and long-tailed chest-nut very still, but with a sickly smile upon his lips, having so much of glory and so little health. He is not far from sixty, but looks seventy-five. The two heavy batteries of artillery with their splendid teams of six horses, each drawing a sixteen pound gun, march past him first. They have not a strap or a buckle out of place or unclean, and they are followed by the rest of the last army of occupation in France, most admirable in their discipline, order and equipment.

Down they march in serried squadrons amidst the clash of cymbals and the call of trumpets, the forest of bayonets ever moving on in time and measure; on down the Rue de St. Pierre and through the Gate of France, the French crowd falling back as they advance. The figure of the Commander-in-Chief, Excellenz Manteuffel, becomes bent more and more, as though his strength were failing him; but the soldierly form of Colonel Von Haeseler moves restlessly about as the troops pass by with their bands playing and their colors flying, and strains uneasily at the sharp cavalry bit. The scene at this moment was very

STRIKING AND PAINPUL.

All along the high street of the dishonored city was the triumphant foe departing victorious and leaving the deflowered land to wail over its shame. There were burning blushes and hot tears on French faces, as they turned away from so much degradation, followed by so much an

field gendarmes of the rear guard close behind them.

Last came Excellenz Manteuffel, bent nearly double, and dozing behind his spectacles. Beside him Colonel Von der Burg sat on his stately black, with his right hand resting disdainfully on his hip and his forage cap aside upon his massive head, and the tail chestnut of Lieutenant Colonel Count Von Haeseler plunged and reared, scattering the French crowd, which was smail and scanty. So the last Germans passed through the dark gaze of France and into the light, open country beyond!

EVERYBODY CHLEBRATES.

No. there was not a single house or a window in a house where a flag of joy was not hung out to celebrate the departure of the Germans, and in the same breath that men rejoiced over peace they talked again of war and hungered for it.

Flags, flags, flags everywhere, and hoisted wherever a flag could be put. Hawkers went about the streets selling sheaves of flags, which hung from the best houses were surmounted by mourning crowns in memory of Alsace-Lorraine:

were bought up eagerly. Some of the flags which hung from the best houses were surmounted by mourning crowns in memory of Alsace-Lorraine; and, when the rain poured down again, a fair, blue-cyed woman said, "The skies are weeping for Alsack."

The French troops arrived by the train and tumbled and struggled out of the carriages with their arms and baggage, and when they had done so, said to each other, "Im wa pas donne Vordre december," a fact which had altogether sipped their memory. But their officers were not inclined to be severe on them for this breach of discipline, and Colonel Isuard, a tight little veteran in ample red trousers, marched about, attended by the Prefect, without paying much attention to the immediate details of his command.

In the evening the city was beautifully illuminated with lamps of tricolored paper and Bengal fires, with transparencies and pretty and artistic devices.

On the March-Latest Public Appearance of the Prince Imperial in France-

ETAIN, Sept. 15, 1873. past four on the morning of Sunday, September 14, and I had scarcely made my coffee and opened my New York Herald and the next American mail than there came a hurried knocking upon my chamber door. The brisk little city was already astir, and when I went to answer this peremptory summons a printer's devil of much activity thrust a damp slip of paper into my hand and disappeared in the darkness whistling "Tres johe, peu polie," the latest sparkling chorus which has charmed the people of France in "La Fille de la Mère Angot," but which (alas for novelty!) I heard just twenty-two years ago at the Carl Theatre in Vienna. The damp slip of paper was sent to me by a friendly town councillor, and contained a manu-script copy of a telegram which three hours bence will be read by the greatest of French living statesmen with glad eyes which, perhaps, will moisten with a patriot's emotion. Here are the words on the damp slip of paper, which has been

rained upon:

"Monsieur Thiers à Ouchy, près Lausanne:

"Verdun est complètement évacué. Etain, notre
bonne ville, le sera dans deux jours. La libération
du territoire est un fait accompil. C'est votre
œuvre. Nous vous en devons une éternelle reconnaissance."

[Suivent de nombreuses signatures.]

Thiers" (and there is nothing finer even in America than this simple style of address to a man who has nickname. Monsieur Thiers, then, nothing more), "at Ouchy, near Lausanne—Verdun is completely evacuated. Our good town of Etain will be in two days. The liberation of the territory is an accomplished fact. This is your work. We owe you eternal gratitude for it." [Here follow the signatures of all who have signa-

It was surely a cruel mockery of fate when a

decree went forth that the city which had during the late war should remain the last pledge in German hands for THE RANSOM OF PRANCE. But it took the place of Belfort in French and Ger-

man diplomatic negotiations and was obliged to submit to the hard destiny which inevitably awaits all famous men and things. Now, as to this "eterall famous men and things. Now, as so this "eter-nal gratitude" for M. Thiers, A nation's thanks are really the only public honors worth having—the spontaneous thanks, I mean, and not a vote of thanks, with an annuity possibly for three lives, got through a political party in a well packed Parlia-ment—and these thanks offered to M. Thiers are spontaneous thanks of no pecuniary advertising or place-hunting value to the grateful. The question which remains is, whether the first President of the third French Republic has or has not deserved

such a noble recompense as that awarded to him this morning. JUST PRAISE TO A GREAT MAN, NOT ALONE A GREAT

such a noble recompense as that awarded to him this morning.

JUST PRAISE TO A GREAT MAN, NOT ALONE A GREAT PRENCHMAN.

When the last caunon shot had been heard under the walls of Paris France was helpless, mutitated and ruined. Her administration was utterly disorganized, her trade annihilated, her resources gone. She stood face to face with a frantic civil war and an obligation to pay five milliards of france, besides her own expenses, to the enemy who had just beaten ner. Although there are now so many pretenders to the chief authority in France not one of them expressed the least desire to undertake the conduct of a government which was at once insolvent and insecure. The French people were obliged to accept a provisional republic, for they could not have had a monarchy, and the provisional Republic saved their credit and restored their place among European nations after it had really become vacant. In two years the war indemnity was paid and nearly every trace of ruin had disappeared. One name dominates this period, and history will not know how to refuse it the meed of a greatness very true and high. It is that of M. Thiers. This libustrious French citizen, after having opposed a rash and foolish war with unexampled caurage and genius, was forced to sign the most humilating conditions of peace which have been imposed by any conqueror upon the vanquished for more than haif a century. He did so, as he himself has told us, "abedding tears of blood," and M. Thiers is not a man given to hysterical feelings or expressions. It was, however—it must have been—exquisitely painful to a wise oid man who had foreseen the disasters into which his country had been wantonly plunged to set about the grievous and heavy task of collecting her cinders and remains; to try against all reasonable chance or precedent if they could be reconstituted into a great and living nation. He has, so to speak, resuscitated France, and he was the founder of that nonest conservaive Republic which has guided her swiftly back to health and for

has sent to M. Thiers,

The Germans lie to-night (14th September)

AT ETAIN,
and I drove over the bridge which spans the
little Orne in that small commercial town about
three in the afternoon. There I saw that the Germans had halted upon their homeward march,
and they are now resting upon

THE SABBATN DAY.

They were lounging about in a friendly, conciliatory way as my carriage stopped before the
door of the Hotel de la Sirene, and did not seem
apprehensive of any disturbance, though the population of Etain is much of that tipsy, obstreperous
sham-workman class, and the Captain of the
French gendarmes at Verdun had told
me he was fearful of a riot. I
had expected to find the town very
full, for it is a small, busy place, and I knew that
the main body of the evacuating army was there,
besides the Commander-in-Chief and General Linsingen, with their respective staffs. So I had provided myself with a special recommendation to the
landlord of The Siren, in the hope that he migntfind me a dinner and a bed in some clean house, if
he could not make room for me in his own. But he
stared with a wondering look when I asked if en-

vided myself with a special recommendation to the landlord of The Siren, in the hope that he might find me a dinner and a bed in some clean house, is he could not make room for me in his own. But he stared with a wondering look when I asked if entertainment was to be had for man and beast at Etain, and seemed to be under the impression that I was trying to get a rise out of him. Then he answered "Yes" in a defiant or inquiring manner, as who should say, "What next, Mr. Practical Joker?"

At 7:30 A. M. on Monday morning (September 15) the German army of evacuation mustered on the open space before the Hotel de Ville at Etain, and a considerable crowd, all made up of blouses and the poorer sort of women and children, assembled to see them off. General Linsingen stood booted and spurred before a stone fountain, and one by one the staff rode up and saluted him. There were again the haughty face and gallant figure of Colonel von der Burg seated upon his dark charger, and the spare, lithe orm of Lieutenant Colonel Count Von Haeseler mounted upon a vixenish brown mare, the tearing chestnat having been knocked up.

At 8 A. M. Excellenz Manteuffel cantered up at a see-saw pace upon his well behaved

OLD ROCKING HORSE.

He looked much the better for his night's rest and good fare in the house of Mme. the Widow Fabry. There were a few "Hocks" not many, and no enthusiasm. The word of command was given out, and immediately afterwards the German troops moved off with the regularity and precision of clockwork. Excellenz Manteuffel and precision of clockwork. Excellenz Manteuffel and General Linsingen, with their staff, rode first to-day, though they had closed the march from Verdun. The regiments had their banners furled in black oliskin covers. The ambulance wagons, surmounted by flags, emblazoned with the sern Teuton chivairy paced grandly ahead. Then the late sun of autumn struggled feebly through the rule clouds, as though it wished incoherently to say goodby, and it threw squat, awkward forms in mockery along the ground.

and Doncourt-A Strange Standard Bearer-Final Liberation of French Territory-A Stray Page of History-Passing the Frontier.

METZ, Sept. 19, 1878. German nation as the uniform good conduct of the garrison in occupation of Etain, I feel bound day before yesterday was the Twenty-fourth Prussian regiment of the line, and that the names of the two officers in command who especially distinguished themselves by their uprightness and good sense were Major Luderitz and Captain Burenthaler, names which might be inscribed in letters of gold above the Town Hall of Etain with-

out a single protest from its citizens. be haunted by the ghost of the late Emperor of the French. He was pre-eminently an interesting he came hither in that blundering downward rush

heart, which sees better than the eyes?" I asked of Mme. Liegeois, the landlady of The Siren.

"Very sad, monsieur," she answered, above all, very tired. But not even grief and fatigue could overcome his natural desire to be kind. He spoke to me and my child. She was but a little thing, and he did not know whether she was a girl or a boy, so he inquired with every demonstration of interest. No, his suite were not disrespectful to him. His friends had not yet fallen away from him. He had been still spared that sorrow. What particularly struck me about his manner was that it was so fearless, and that he dared even at such a time to be alone. He went into the case next door and wrote at a side table, with no attendants near nim, so that any one might have dealt him a

foul blow. his mother, but he was more closely guarded. I picked some of his pot hooks (griffonnage) when he was gone. He seemed childishly fond of his father, and in very weak health, poor boy. I (Mme. Liegeois being a kindly soul) longed to kiss him and wrap him up and keep him warm and quiet.

"Many of the French officers who passed back-ward and forward through Etain while the war raged all around us," continued Mme. Liegeois, have left a deep impression on my memory. It was, I think, Monsieur de la Tour d'Auvergne who interested me most. He arrived here half dead with privations and fatigue, while every room in our house was crowded with the prisoners of Sedan. He was so gay and handsome, he bore pain and want so lightly, that we made place for him. A bow and a smile, most graceful, most gal-lant, were all I saw afterward of the brave gentieman, and I have since heard that he was killed. I spent the wretched weeks which followed the dis-aster of Sedan almost entirely in breaking eggs for omelettes. We could cook nothing else fast enough or often enough to relieve the famine of

our people." ETAIN WAS ILLUMINATED on the evening the Frussians left, and I went out with Mme. Liegeois, her brother and her httle daughter to see the lestival. But Heaven seemed to have set its lace against any demonstrations of feigned joy, and the rain came down as steadily as it had done at Verdun. The wind tore the tricolored langs to tatters and purfed out the lights in the tricolored lanterns. Some squibs, some crackers, several yards of ragged bunting made up the rejoicings at Etain, Also some children dancing in a ring sung slowly—

Chamons les Prussiens

Cham one sea Prussiens
liops de la ligne,
Hörf de la ligne,
Hörf de la ligne
Char-ons les Prussiens
Horz de la ligne du Shin.
A very different chant from that of "A Berlin,"
which was once popular. And let us always have
courage to tell the truth. There were some red
eyes and aching hearts which dared not tell their

CONTINUED ON TENTH PAGE.